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Great Falls Americans Press Release

Contact: Kevin Scott, GF Americans Public Relations Coordinator

Phone: (406) 403-8146

NA3HL Showcase: Americans fall to the Alexandria Blizzard, 3-1 on Day Two

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Score Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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BLAINE, Minn., December 18, 2023 — During the second day of competition at the [2023 NA3HL Showcase Tournament](#), the Great Falls Americans (16-11-0-0, 4th in Frontier) were looking for their fourth straight win and second win at the prestigious NA3HL December tournament on Monday night.

Great Falls bested the New Jersey Titans (14-12-1-1, 3rd in East), 2-1 during the opening day on Sunday night. Aiden Kennedy and Sebe Perez each scored as the Americans held on to the victory. George Hinds scored for New Jersey in the first period. Ryan Stowe (19 saves) won in the net for Great Falls and improved his record to 7-2-0-0 ([game story](#)).

Great Falls met the Alexandria (MN) Blizzard (17-5-1-1, 3rd in West) on the ice on Monday night. Both teams were looking to go to 2-0 in the tournament. On Sunday, the Blizzard defeated the El Paso (TX) Rhinos 7-2 with four goals coming in the middle period. Justin Wasvick added two goals for the Blizzard ([box score](#)).

Prior to tonight's game, Alexandria and Great Falls met during the 2019-20 NA3HL Showcase where the Blizzard defeated the Americans, 4-3 in overtime. [Click here](#) for the game story from that contest.



Alexandria (MN) had a short 129-mile trip to the NSC Super Rink in Blaine, Minnesota. Alexandria is one of five teams from Minnesota that have an NA3HL franchise that all play in the West Division ([see all teams](#)).

The Blizzard are currently sitting in third place behind the Rochester (MN) Grizzlies (20-3-1-1) and the Granite City (MN) Lumberjacks (20-5-0-2) and are coached by Jeff Crouse. Justin Wasvick, a native of Grand Forks, ND, leads the team in goals scored (16), assists (17) and points (33).

Great Falls Head Coach Greg Sears has a pair of newcomers that lead the pack for the Americans with Ty O'Bev leading with 21 assists and 38 points while Dmitri Kuleshov tops with 21 goals scored.

Justin Wasvick and Eli Fletcher each scored once and dished out one assist to carry the Alexandria (MN) Blizzard (17-5-1-1, 3rd in West) past the Great Falls Americans (16-11-0-0, 4th in Frontier), 3-1 during the second day of the 2023 NA3HL Showcase tournament in Blaine, Minnesota. Sebe Perez made his first lamplighter for Great Falls in the first period.

Great Falls is now 1-1-0-0 at the tournament and Alexandria goes to 2-0-0-0.

The Blizzard and the Americans traded goals in the first period. Eli Fletcher netted his 15th goal on an unassisted play with twelve minutes remaining for Minnesota. Sebe Perez off the stick of Sam Duehlmeier and Aaron Leaf, lit up the lamp for his first career score as a member of the Great Falls NA3HL franchise three minutes later for the equalizer.

After the first intermission, Alexandria's offense gave the Blizzard two more goals for the 3-1 advantage. Justin Wasvick had a hand in both scoring drives. Wasvick is the team scoring leader and he produced his 16th goal with assistance from Zach Benson and Ethan Boughton three minutes into the second stanza. Before the second intermission, Karsten Senden was the recipient of the third goal by Alexandria. Eli Fletcher and Justin Wasvick, who scored earlier in the contest, helped set up the scoring play. Alexandria outshot Great Falls 28-21 after forty minutes of ice time.

A total of 20 shots were taken in the third period but neither offense could strike the back of the net.

The Blizzard finished with 42 shots-on-goal and nine minor infractions while going 1-for-3 on the power play. The Americans had three minor penalties (all before the third period) and despite nine attempts could not take advantage of the Alexandria being in the penalty box. Great Falls created 21 of their 27 in the first two periods.

Alexandria's Nolan LaCrosse has now won 13 games in 20 appearances (13-5-1-1) and allowed one goal in 27 attempts by Great Falls. Kaden Ryhder saw his first action in the Showcase, and he swatted away 39 shots and was denied his tenth win (9-5-0-0) for the visitors.

[Click here](#) for more information about the tournament that will feature many college and junior scouts in attendance or see the league press release and full results from Day 2 by [clicking here](#).

FRONTIER DIVISION UPDATE AT NA3HL SHOWCASE: Here are the following daily game recaps from the Frontier Division teams during Day 2 action (Monday) at the 2023 NA3HL Showcase.

The Helena Bighorns (23-2-0-0, 2nd in Frontier) kept their winning streak intact by defeating the West Bend (WI) Power (21-5-0-2, 1st in Central), 3-2. After a scoreless first stanza, Helena held a 2-1 advantage behind goals from Ty Moore and Jason Hammett. Owen Drake scored the first goal of the game early in the middle stanza. Each squad scored once more in the third period. Braden Cunningham added the eventual game-winning score with seven minutes remaining. Jesse Schindel (8-0-0-0) redirected 15 shots for the winning side. Meanwhile, Walker Berner lost his first game (5-1-0-0) but still managed to get 24 saves ([Box Score](#)).

The Texas Brahmas (17-8-1-2, 2nd in South) survived an overtime to overcome the Badlands (SD) Sabres (9-12-3-2, 5th in Frontier), 3-2. Alex Cagan and Gabe Arteaga scored for Texas and Brooks Roaldson struck the back of the net before the second intermission. Peyton Wilson (Badlands) put in the equalizer to send the game into overtime. Sam Bailey scored the game-winning score with 13 seconds remaining.

Brendan Forden (7-3-1-1) swatted away 21 attempts by the Sabres. Despite getting 35 saves, Badlands netminder Easton Eriksmoen (6-6-1-0) took the loss for South Dakota ([Box Score](#)).

The Long Beach (NY) Sharks (6-19-0-1, 6th in East) earned a 3-0 shutout victory over the Yellowstone (WY) Quake (0-24-2-0, 8th in Frontier) on Monday. Sam O'Neil had one goal and one assist for the Sharks, who picked up their sixth win. Nolan Nemecek and Chris Keller each put the biscuit in the basket. Colten McIntyre (3-4-0-1) was perfect in the net by rejecting all 18 shots by the Quake. John Hughes made 41 saves but allowed three goals as he searches for his first victory (0-8-1-0) ([Box Score](#)).

A night after getting crushed by the Willmar (MN) WarHawks, 8-1, the Butte Irish (9-17-0-0, 7th in Frontier) allowed one goal and scored four in a 4-1 decision over the Peoria (IL) Mustangs (7-19-2-0, 5th in Central) on Monday. Carson Streich accrued two goals and teammates Toby Kerr and Andrew Browe added one each for the Irish. Peoria's Colin Cash accumulated one goal in the second stanza in the loss. Braylon Rogers (5-6-0-0) made 30 saves for the Irish in his second appearance at the Showcase tournament. Kason Yamada (2-7-2-0) swatted away 17 shots ([Box Score](#)).

The Bozeman Ice Dogs (16-11-0-1, 3rd in Frontier) are now 2-0 in the Showcase tournament by escaping with a 2-1 victory over the Atlanta Capitals. Despite neither squad scoring in the opening period, Lex Steckelberg and Spencer Wilkinson gave Bozeman a 2-0 advantage with 12:34 remaining and held the Capitals to one goal before the final horn sounded. Matthew Rynanen (11-9-0-1) accrued 22 saves for the Ice Dogs in his first appearance this season at the Minnesota tournament. Alex Croy acquired 42 saves in his fifth regulation loss of the year (6-5-1-0) ([Box Score](#)).

The Northeast (MA) Generals (24-2-0-1, 1st in East) scored first against the Gillette (WY) Wild (26-1-0-1, 1st in Frontier). Sean Gorman scored on the unassisted scoring drive for the one-goal lead after the first stanza. In the second period, Isaac Young and Matt Siems put the puck in the net for Wyoming while John Rodgers chipped in one for the Generals. Both teams failed to produce any scores in the third frame or the overtime period, so a shootout was necessary to declare a winning side. Gillette's offense was too much during the shootout with all three players (Chase Hapka, Isaac Young, and Wylee Gladen) all getting the puck around and in for the score against Northeast goalie Ian Kangas. Michael Locke was the only player for the Generals to score against the opposing goaltender in the shootout. The 3-2 narrow victory gave Weston Gerke of the Wild another win (9-0-0-0). He provided 25 saves in 65 minutes of action. Ian Kangas (0-0-0-1) racked up 31 saves in a rare setback for the Generals ([Box Score](#)).

Sheridan Hawks (10-16-1-1, 6th in Frontier) standout Daniel Shelden scored in each of the three periods for a hat trick that helped the Wyoming NA3HL club to a 6-2 win over the St. Louis Jr. Blues (4-18-1-2, 6th in Central). In addition to Shelden's three goals, Elijah White, Tanner Freed, and Ayden Attungana all saw another goal added to their resume. Mason Wright and Fred Bramstedt for St. Louis scored in the final period. Zach Broxterman (4-9-1-1) secured his fourth win along with 23 saves for the Hawks. Matyas Bajgar (17 saves) suffered his fifth regulation defeat (2-5-0-1) ([Box Score](#)).

On Monday, the Frontier Division went 5-2-1-0 for the second straight day.

NOTES: Great Falls Americans coach Greg Sears is one victory shy of 300 victories in his coaching career. He could accomplish that milestone before the Christmas break by winning two of the three games at the 2023 NA3HL Showcase starting on Sunday, December 17 when the Americans will be at the prestigious tournament in Blaine, Minnesota for three days.

The Americans had two players receive Honorable Mention honors for the weekly “NA3HL Stars of the Week” for the week ending December 10, 2023. Forward Cade Bendigo and defenseman Ty Brander were the honorees for Great Falls for their play against the Yellowstone (WY) Quake on the road last week. [Click here](#) for more information.

In this week’s “Baldy’s Puck Drop” Newsletter, Americans team owner Matt Leaf has a player profile of forward Zac Orwig, Americans travel plans to the NA3HL Showcase, sponsor information, and recognition of Cade Bendigo and Ty Brander as Honorable Mention “Stars of the Week” honors in the NA3HL from this past week. [Click here](#) to view this past week’s newsletter and all the weekly “Baldy’s Puck Drop” Newsletters.

Check out all the Americans photos throughout the season with many of the game action photos taken by Americans photographer, Dustin Bauer. [Click here](#) to view all the photos from the 2023-24 season.



[Click here](#) to view the Americans online team store that features a variety of different souvenirs to purchase. A store is available at all home games. Fans can also buy game day tickets on the website prior to the game by [clicking here](#).

Please check out the Americans website at www.greatfallsamericans.com for all your updated news, game summaries, rosters, photo galleries, etc.

AMERICANS NA3HL SHOWCASE WATCH PARTY: The Stadium Bar and Casino, located at 1121 5th Street South in Great Falls, hosts the “Americans Watch Party” this season when the Americans are on the road (including the Showcase Tournament). Fans are invited to get food and drinks and watch the game.

After the Christmas break, the Americans will travel to Butte, Montana for two games against the Irish on January 5-6 before Great Falls returns to the friendly confines of the Great Falls Ice Plex for two games against the Bozeman Ice Dogs on January 12-13. [Click here](#) for the 2023-24 Great Falls Americans schedule and results.

NAHLTV is the place to catch all the Great Falls Americans contests all season long. [Click here](#) to learn more about how to watch any of the Americans NA3HL junior hockey games on NAHL TV during the 2023-24 season.

NEXT CONTEST: After facing the New Jersey Titans (Sunday) and the Alexandria (MN) Blizzard on Monday, the Americans will complete the [2023 NA3HL Showcase Tournament](#) with a matchup against the Louisiana Drillers (14-12-0-0), a team in sixth place in the South Division on Tuesday, December 19, 2023. The teams will meet at the [National Sports Center \(NSC\) Super Rink](#) at 11:00AM (MST) or 12:00PM (CST). The Mason City (IA) Toros (14-12-2-0, 4th in West) defeated the Louisiana Drillers on Monday, 8-2 ([Box Score](#)).

[Click here](#) to read the full story and schedule.

CONTACT:

Greg Sears
Great Falls Americans Head Coach/General Manager
Cell Phone: 715-566-2811
Email: gsears@gfamericans.com

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